

VZCZCXRO1554
OO RUEHIK RUEHPOD RUEHYG
DE RUEHTI #0219 0811617

ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 211617Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6853
INFO RHMFIS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 0925
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUFNPKB/COMUSNAVEUR NAPLES IT PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMCSSU/FBI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUDKSR/EUCOM PLANS AND ANALYSES STUTTGART GE PRIORITY

UNCLAS TIRANA 000219

SIPDIS

AIDAC
SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/SCE and PM/WRA
DEPT OF JUSTICE FOR OPDAT, ICITAP
USAID FOR DCHA/OFDA, AID/W
GENEVA PLEASE PASS TO USAID AND RMA
BUDAPEST PLEASE PASS TO USAID/RFMC
SOFIA FOR LEGAT ROBERTS

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: MASS EAID NATO SENV AL
SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL ALBANIAN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE -- SITE
CLEAN-UP

REF: A) TIRANA 200, B) TIRANA 204

¶1. (U) In the aftermath of the tragic Gerdec munitions explosion (ref A), the GOA has asked for USG assistance in site clean-up. (See also Ref B, which requests assistance in the investigation.) Deputy Prime Minister (and Defense Minister nominee) Gazmend Oketa sent the following letter to Ambassador Withers on March 21:

¶2. (SBU) Begin text:

Tirana
21 March 2008

Dear Ambassador Withers:

The Government of Albania respectfully requests U.S. emergency assistance concerning the 15 March 2008 Gerdec accident.

We respectfully request assistance in: Site clearance of debris and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) of the immediate blast area (Zone 1) in Gerdec, the safe loading and transportation of all items deemed safe to move by the U.S. selected contractor to a demilitarization facility selected most appropriate by the US contractor; and the demilitarisation by the U.S. contractor of all ordnance removed from site.

The U.S. participation for ordnance/debris removal from the Gerdec site should compliment and integrate with the existing Ministry of Defence (MOD) on-site operations and/or any international EOD teams donated as assistance to ensure success of the project.

We request equipment donations to the MOD required to support and execute this operation, as agreed between the Ministry and the contractor selected by the U.S. Department of State to carry out this project.

We also request assistance in the destruction of all Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), including missiles, launch tubes, gripstocks and battery cooling units (BCU's). The Government of Albania requests additional U.S. assistance in Small Arms/Light Weapons (SA/LW) destruction and facilities upgrades for enhanced security based on the number of MANPADS the MOD makes available for

destruction.

The Government of Albania is committed to fully supporting all aspects and needs of the U.S. contractor to process all necessary paperwork through the MOD and other agencies concerning the Gerdec site clearance project, implementation of the 82mm mortar project in Gramsh, and the MANPADS destruction project.

Sincerely,
Gazmend Oketa
Deputy Prime Minister

End text.

WITHERS